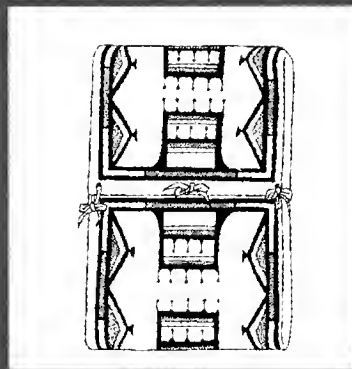
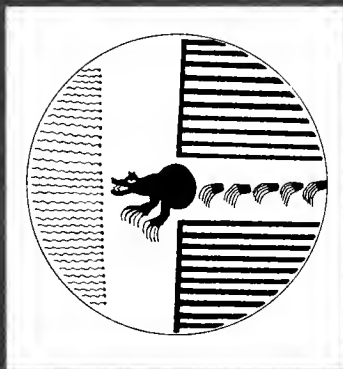
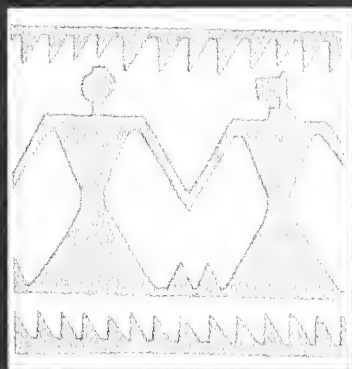
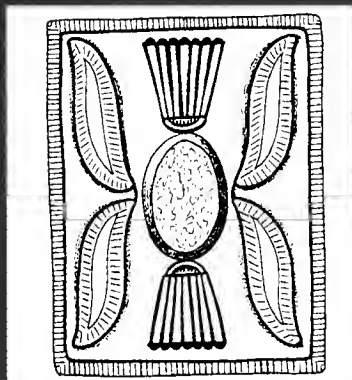


# How to Have a Healthy Heart



**Indian Health Service Division of  
Diabetes Treatment and Prevention**



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**“Our children  
need us. They  
will need us for  
many years.  
It’s worth it to  
prevent heart  
disease.”**

## **What is heart disease?**

Heart disease is a group of heart problems that includes chest pain, heart attack and heart failure.

Heart disease means that the heart is overworked or damaged. Your heart cannot work as well.

**You can prevent heart disease. You can have a healthy heart.**

# Who gets heart disease?

People with one or more risk factors are more likely to get heart disease than people who don't have any risk factors.

**Know the risk factors for heart disease. If you have one or more risk factors, you are more likely to get heart disease.**





**“Heart disease runs in our family. It is a risk factor we cannot change.”**

# **What are risk factors for heart disease?**

Risk factors are the things that increase your chances for getting heart disease.

The most important risk factors for heart disease are:

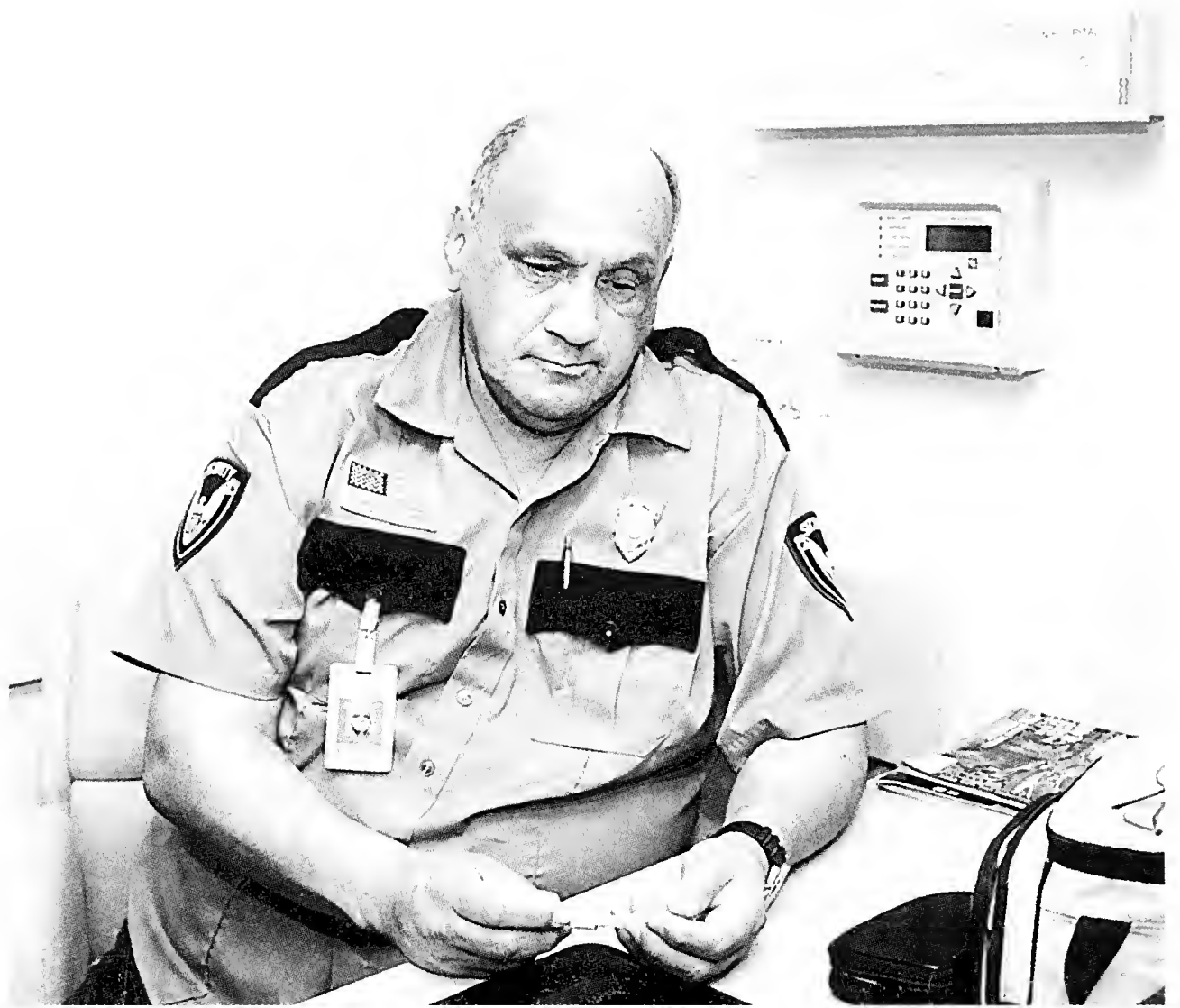
- being overweight
- having diabetes, and having blood sugar that is out of control
- having high cholesterol
- having high blood pressure
- smoking or using tobacco

You can change these risk factors.

Some risk factors cannot be changed. These are:

- being over age 40
- having family members with heart disease

**“I am reducing  
my risks for  
heart disease.  
I have lowered  
my cholesterol.  
I check my  
blood pressure  
once a week.  
I control my  
blood sugar.”**



## **You can reduce your risk**

You can reduce your chances for getting heart disease. There are things you can change.

You can:

- lose weight
- control your blood sugar
- lower your cholesterol
- lower your blood pressure
- stop smoking or using tobacco

**You can reduce heart disease. You can have a healthy heart! The next pages will give you some ideas.**

# What if you are overweight?

Extra weight makes your heart work harder. Losing 10-20 pounds will help you lower your risk for heart disease.

If you want to lose weight, a slow loss of 2 pounds a week is best. You can lose weight in two ways:

- make good food choices
- become more active

**You can lose weight. You can have a healthy heart!**



**“I changed my eating habits. I eat smaller portions. I eat low-fat food. I lost 70 pounds! I feel great!”**

# What are ways to lose weight?

You can lose weight. Here are some ways to lose weight:

- Make good food choices.
  - Eat less fat food.
  - Eat less sugar food and drinks.
  - Drink less alcohol.
  - Eat fewer snacks.
  - Drink more water.
- Eat three meals a day.
  - Space meals 4-5 hours apart.
  - Watch your portion sizes.
  - Avoid second helpings.
- Become more active.

Your health care provider can help you with a weight-loss plan.

**“I am changing  
the way I eat.  
I eat more low-fat  
and low-sugar  
8 food.”**





**“We walk together every day. It’s a great way to stay fit. It’s fun!”**

## **What are ways to become more active?**

Walking is a good way to be more active. Walk five days or more a week. Start small and work up to 30 minutes each time.

Other physical activity is good for you. Try:

- riding a bike
- hiking the hills
- dancing
- walking in shallow water
- canoeing
- swimming

Check with your health care provider about becoming more active.

**“We know that  
diabetes and  
heart disease go  
hand-in-hand.  
We are at risk for  
heart disease.”**



## **What if you have diabetes?**

Having diabetes increases your risk for heart disease. Having high blood sugar for long periods of time can cause heart disease.

Controlling your blood sugar will help you reduce your risk for heart disease.

# What can you do to control blood sugar?

These are the things you can do to control your blood sugar:

- If you are overweight, lose weight.
- Make healthy food choices.
- Be more active.
- Take your diabetes medicine at the same time each day.
- Keep your scheduled appointments with your health care provider.
- Know your blood sugar levels.

**You can control your blood sugar. You can have a healthy heart!**



**“I work out at the fitness center. Being active has helped me lose weight, and control my blood sugar.”**

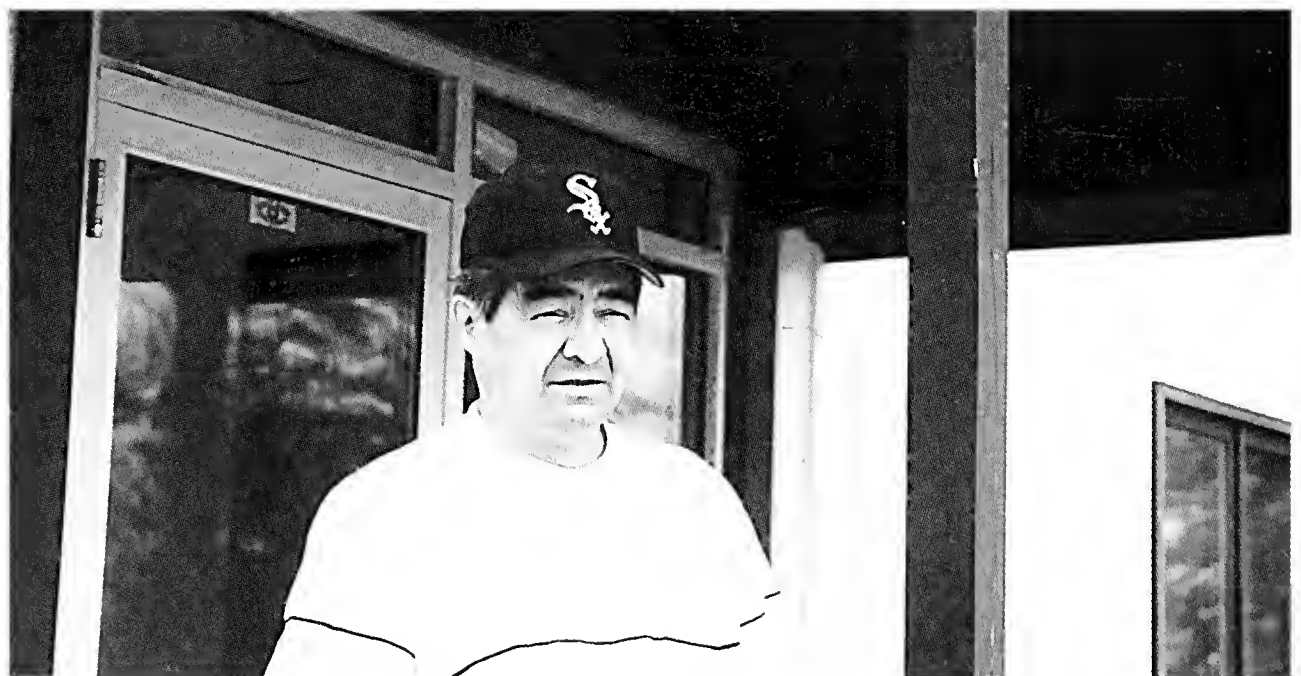
# What about high cholesterol?

Cholesterol is a type of fat in the blood. This fat can build up and clog the blood vessels. Clogged blood vessels can lead to heart disease. Here are the things you can do to lower your cholesterol:

- Eat less meat and fried food.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Be more active.
- Lose weight if you are overweight.
- Stop smoking or tobacco use.
- Get your cholesterol checked at least once a year.

Ask your health care provider about your cholesterol numbers. Your cholesterol should be below 200. Some people may need medicine to help lower their cholesterol.

**“I quit eating  
high-fat food.  
I walk every day.  
I quit smoking.”**





**Get your blood pressure checked often. Your blood pressure should be below 130/80.**

## **What about high blood pressure?**

High blood pressure can also cause heart disease.

You may not know if your blood pressure is high. Check your blood pressure often. Your blood pressure should be below 130/80.

If you have high blood pressure, these are the things you need to do:

- Take your blood pressure pills.
- Check your blood pressure often.
- Cut down on salt and salty food.
- Lose weight.
  - Make healthy food choices.
  - Be more active.
- Keep you scheduled appointments with your health care provider.
- Stop smoking or tobacco use.

**You can control your blood pressure. You can have a healthy heart.**

# You can reduce your risk for heart disease

**You can have a healthy heart!**

See your health care provider. They can help you prevent heart disease.

**“We plan on  
living long,  
healthy lives.  
There are things  
we can do to  
stay healthy.  
There are things  
we can do to  
prevent heart  
disease.”**



# Know your numbers

Your health care provider can order simple tests to check your blood sugar, cholesterol and other blood fats. People with diabetes need these tests. Find out your numbers. Keep a record. Ask your health care provider what numbers or goals are best for you.

Date	A1C (Goal -- below 7%)	Blood Pressure (Goal -- below 130/80)	Total Cholesterol (Goal -- below 200)	HDL (Goal -- men - above 40, women - above 45)	LDL (Goal -- below 100)	Triglycerides (Goal -- below 150)

Sincere thanks go to the many people who appear in this booklet. They generously shared their stories about diabetes, and allowed photographs to be taken to help others who have diabetes or are at risk for diabetes.



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